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November 11, 2013

William McGonagle  
Assistant Commissioner of Corrections  
New Hampshire Department of Corrections  
105 Pleasant Street  
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Re: The New Hampshire Women's Prison Project

Good morning, Bill,

I want to thank you and the Commissioner for the meeting you held on October 15, 2013 to discuss the new Women's Prison Project.

The neighborhood had an opportunity to be heard and I believe their input was well received. I am only writing for my wife and me and not for the neighborhood.

I wanted to send this letter sooner. However, I had an intervening operation and am just now digging out from my workload. This letter is to share some thoughts with you.

**1. Call Street Relocation**

It was mentioned that Call Street would be the access for construction purposes and perhaps become the permanent access to the Women's Prison.

Given the current intersection of Call Street with North State Street at an angle, at the curve and on a hill, it seems to me that Call Street should be relocated to the north where a 90 degree intersection can be constructed. That intersection should provide sufficient lines of sight for northbound traffic at the posted speed. That intersection could also be located between two houses on the east side of North State Street so that the headlights from exiting traffic would not bother people in their homes. There should also be sufficient area for a two-lane reconstruction of Call Street.

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The newly designed Call Street would be the major access for the new facility, as was mentioned during the meeting.

**2. Palm Street**

Strong assurances were provided to the neighborhood that Palm Street would not be used for access. Specifically, access over to the new facility via Palm Street would be off the table during construction and thereafter. We appreciate those assurances.

**3. Vacant Lot at Palm Street and North State Street**

There was considerable discussion about the vacant lot at the northwest corner of North State Street and Palm Street. Recently, it was used to process materials for the North State Street construction project.

Relative to the Women's Prison, the Department advised that it would likely be used for construction trailers. Neatly organized, that could be a positive use during construction. Anticipating that the general contractor and numerous subcontractors would want their trailers there and considering the limited size of the lot, as well as the distance of the lot from the actual construction site, it seems to me to not only be improbable, but economically not viable to also try to process construction materials and crushing rock on that lot.

I would anticipate that rock crushing would be far more economically viable if it occurred in proximity to the blasting and the construction site.

I would expect the Department's contract for construction would specify that no earth product processing would occur on the Palm Street lot, which would completely address the neighbors' concerns.

**4. Blasting**

It was mentioned that blasting notices would be provided to homes within a 500 foot radius around the blasting site. There is a substantial amount of bedrock on Rattlesnake Hill. I would suggest that from a geological perspective the Department rethink the 500 foot notification zone. Blasting in bedrock can travel much farther than 500 feet.

Also, I anticipate the blasting could take several months, up to a four month period. Could the Department check on both the distance for the notice and the duration of blasting?

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Will pre-blasting inspections of properties be a part of the project? What would those inspections include?

**5. The Use of Palm Street Lot Following Construction**

There was considerable discussion of the future use of the Palm Street lot following construction. It would be important to the community for that lot to be somewhat beautified using some landscaping and paved parking following construction.

The Department actually promised the lot would be paved many years ago during the last major construction project and that did not occur.

That level of improvement could be easily absorbed in the construction budget and help mitigate the impacts of the Prison facilities, including the new Women's Prison on the neighborhood.

**6. Lighting of the Women's Prison**

There was considerable concern about the lighting of the Women's Prison. Assurances were provided that directional lighting with control and focus would be utilized.

We recognize that, because it is a correctional facility, the area does need to be well lit. However, in some key areas, landscaping could also help intercept some of the light flow offsite to the neighborhoods.

Would this be considered as a part of the project?

**7. Night Shooting**

It seemed the Department was surprised to learn that the Police Academy uses the target range at the Prison in the evening for practice. That does have a significant impact on the neighborhood.

We appreciate the Department's efforts to terminate this activity.

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8. Minimum Security Facility

Residents of the east side of North State Street across from the Minimum Security Facility expressed concern regarding immodest activity occurring at the Minimum Security Facility that is disruptive to the neighborhood, as well as certain actions when Minimal Security personnel are walking off site in the community.

Everyone was pleased to hear of the immediately pro-active response of the Department to terminate this activity.

Again, Cinda and I thank Commissioner Wren, you and the other representative of the Department at the meeting for your concerns and pro-active responses.

You are a great spokesman and moderator for the Department.

With best regards,

*Thank you!*

Sincerely,

*Ray D'Amante*  
Raymond P. D'Amante

RPD/mlb

cc: William Wren, Commissioner of Corrections

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